*[Translation]*

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister that as the Hon'ble Minister has stated in Para 'e' of his reply that reforms would be made to improve the utilization of existing capacity.

*[English]*

Modernisation of the existing units, improvement of the transmission and distribution systems, and the quality of power supply to the consumers.

*[Translation]*

Besides, agriculture and domestic use, power is being consumed by the industrial sector on a large scale in the country. The previous Government had allowed the big industries with turnover above Rs. 100 crore to install their own small power units. It had also announced to provide facilities for installing these units.

**12.00 hrs.**

However, according to my information these facilities are not being provided to the industrial units who want to set up captive power Projects. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister what type of facilities would be provided to the industries for setting up Captive Power Projects?

*[English]*

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, though it is beyond the scope of this question, since the hon. Member has asked the question seriously, I would like to respond to him. With regard to captive power projects. If the hon. Member has any specific instance and if he brings it to my notices, I shall definitely extend immediate personal attention and see that the problem is solved.

---

## WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*[Translation]*

### Pollution due to Power Projects

*64. SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the power projects spread pollution in the environment;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps taken by the Government to minimise the level of pollution due to such projects?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) to (c) Power projects can cause environmental pollution, the nature and extent of which depends on the type of fuel used and the power generation systems installed. Power projects based on coal emit suspended particulate matter, sulphur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen as the main pollutants. Combined cycle power plants using clean fuel such as gas/naphtha emit oxides of nitrogen.

The steps taken for minimising the levels of pollution from power plants include the following:

(i) Directions have been issued under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to the power plants for complying with the prescribed pollution discharge standards by installing requisite pollution control systems.

(ii) All thermal power plants having an investment of over Rs. 50 crores require an environmental clearance under which conditions prescribe environmental safeguards and pollution control systems including provision of green belt and utilisation of flyash over a prescribed time frame.

(iii) Mandatory use of beneficiated coal with an ash content not exceeding 34 per cent has been stipulated with effect from 1st June, 2001 based on distance criteria.

*[English]*

### Norms for Opening Post Offices

*65. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the existing norms for opening of Post offices in Rural, Urban, Tribal and Backward areas; and

(b) the status of implementation of suggestions made in Justice Talwar Committee Report regarding changing the existing norms?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) The norms for opening post offices in Urban, Rural, Tribal and backward areas are given in the Statement enclosed

(b) Justice Talwar Committee has not suggested any change in the existing norms for the opening of post offices.

*Statement*

*Norms for opeing of Post Offices*
*(Last revised in 1991)*

**1. Norms for Opening of Extra-Departmental Branch post offices (EDBOs)**

**1.1 Population:**

(a) *In Normal Areas :*

3000 population in a group of villages (including the PPO villages)

(b) *In the Hilly, Tribal, Desert and Inaccessible Areas:*

500 population in an individual village or 1000 population in a group of villages.

**1.2. Distance:**

(a) *In Normal Areas :*

The minimum distance from the nearest existing post office will be 3 kms.

(b) *In Hilly, Tribal, Desert and Inaccessible Areas :*

The distance limit will be the same as above except that in Hilly Areas, the minimum distance limit can be relaxed by the Directorate in cases where such relaxation if warranted by special circumstances which should be clearly explained while submitting a proposal.

**1.3. Anticipated Income :**

(a) *In Normal Areas :*

The minimum anticipated revenue will be 33-$^1/_3$% of cost.

(b) *In Hilly, Tribal, Desert and Inaccessible Areas :*

The minimum anticipated income will be 15% of the cost.

*Note :* It is to be ensured while sanctioning a new Branch Post office that the population to be served by the parent Branch post office does not fall below the minimum prescribed in the criteria. Similarly, the loss of the parent office should continue to be within permissible limits.

**2. Norms for Upgrading/Opening of New Departmental Sub Post offices :**

2.1. *In Rural areas :*

The minimum of work load of the Extra Departmental Branch Post Office should be five hours per day. The permissible annual loss should be not more than Rs. 2400/- in normal areas and Rs. 4800/- in Tribal and Hilly areas.

2.2. *In Urban Areas :*

2.2.1. In urban areas, the post office should be initially self supporting and at the time of the first annual review, it should show 5% profit to be eligible for further retention.

2.2.2. The distance between two post offices should not be less than 1.5 Km. in cities with a population of 20 lakhs and above, and 2 Kms. in other urban areas. If it is a Delivery Post Office, the distance from the nearest Delivery Post office should not be less than 5 kms.

2.2.3. Heads of Circles have powers to relax the distance condition in 10% of the cases.

2.2.4. A Delivery Post Office in Urban Area should have a minimum of 7 Postmen's beats.

*[Translation]*

**Participation of Private Sector in Road Construction**

*67. SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHARY :

SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have firmed up any policy for the participation of private sector in road-construction activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The policy has following salient features :—

(i) Road Sector has been declared as an industry.

(ii) Procedure for land acquisition/environmental clearances has been simplified.

(iii) Detailed guidelines for BOT project issued.

(iv) National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), an autonomous body operationalised and authorised to take up BOT projects. NHAI can participate in such projects by contributing upto 30% of the equity.

(v) Capital subsidy by Government/NHAI upto 40% of the project can be provide for improving financial viability of the project on case to case basis.

(vi) Treating highway and housing and other development activities forming integral part of highway project as a part of road infrastructure.

(vii) Duty free import of sophisticated equipment for highway projects.

(viii) Corporate tax exemption of 100% in the first 5 years and 30% concession in the next 5 years to be availed of in 20 years.

(ix) Automatic approval for foreign equity upto 74% and upto 100% on case to case basis allowed.

(c) Does not arise.